

**THE DAILY EXPRESS  
28 NOVEMBER 1951**

**THE BEST OF LIFE  
Bruce Blunt's Column**

**Not So Bad**

Revival of interest in Aleister Crowley has brought forth a stream of smug moral comments from critics who never knew him.

Crowley was not as bad as all that. He had a remarkable and well-stored mind. He had great kindness. He could be very good company.

There is a queer tale of the last portrait which was done of him. It was a drawing by Augustus John. It was hung at an exhibition of that artist's work. When several, including myself, saw it, we thought that there had been a mistake. It was so unlike the Crowley whom we had known.

I suggested to John that the drawing had been wrongly labelled. He answered: "No, it is Crowley all right, but I did not recognize him myself."

He then told me how Crowley had come to see him in the country not long before his death. The familiar heavy jowl and fleshiness were gone, and the face had become that of an ascetic, a Spanish grandee with a little pointed beard. Impressed by the qualities of the head as he then saw it, John did that fine drawing.

But it was certainly not the Crowley of former times. The old magician had brought off a vanishing trick at last.